



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 22, 2009

## **MAYOR JERRY SANDERS**

### **FACT SHEET**

### **MAYOR FORMS CITIZENS' TASK FORCE TO ADVISE ON CONVENTION CENTER EXPANSION**

*Group's Recommendations Will Ensure Venue Stays Competitive*

San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders has named 17 local community and business leaders to his newly formed Citizens' Task Force on the San Diego Convention Center Project. The group is charged with engaging the public to develop a set of recommendations to the mayor on matters related to the proposed expansion of the Convention Center.

"I can not overstate the importance to San Diego of remaining competitive in the convention business," Sanders said. "In the midst of an economic downturn, we cannot afford to neglect an asset that reliably produces revenues that support essential city services."

Among the group's duties will be to determine what San Diego needs to remain competitive in the convention and meeting industry; evaluate the feasibility of an expansion to the current Convention Center and related developments; identify financing options for an expansion that rely mainly on Convention Center-related revenues; and address issues related to public access to the water, resource conservation and waterfront enhancement.

In order to ensure the public is engaged in the process, the meetings will be held at times and in locations that make them accessible to the public and encourage participation, and they will be subject to the state's open-meeting laws.

Since opening in 1989, the Convention Center has generated more than \$16.3 billion for San Diego's economy. The center's business supports more than 12,000 local jobs, and its events have generated sales and transient occupancy tax revenues of more than \$331 million, including \$30 million in the last fiscal year alone.

The Task Force members represent diverse interests – San Diego taxpayers, the Convention Center's fellow port tenants, the hospitality industry, organized labor and the business and economic development communities.

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## **TASK FORCE MEMBERS:**

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|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| ▪ Cheryl Kendrick, Co-Chair | ▪ Steve Cushman, Co-Chair |
| ▪ Richard Bartell           | ▪ Suzie Baumann           |
| ▪ Charles Black             | ▪ Gordon Boerner          |
| ▪ Bill Evans                | ▪ Pete Garcia             |
| ▪ Bill Geppert              | ▪ Lorena Gonzalez         |
| ▪ Lani Lutar                | ▪ Fred Maas               |
| ▪ Mike McDowell             | ▪ Vince Mudd              |
| ▪ Bob Nelson                | ▪ Mark Steele             |
| ▪ Diane Takvorian           |                           |

## **TASK FORCE TENTATIVE MEETING SCHEDULE:**

February Focus: Convention Center Success & Impact on Local Tax Revenues

- Convention Center's profile and success in the convention industry
- Convention Center's impact on the local economy and tax base

March Focus: Industry Analysis & Utilization

- An overview of the convention industry
- Overview of the current utilization and marketing of the San Diego Convention Center

April Focus: Market Demand and Utilization Impact

- Market demand for an expanded convention center
- Potential negative impact of no expansion

May Focus: Program Elements

- Convention Center program review and discussion
- Hotel program, water taxi review and discussion
- Overall design and environmental elements (opportunities & benefits)

June Focus: Cost and Financing

- Cost of the proposed expansion and related developments and/or enhancements

- Funding options for a proposed expansion, hotel development or other enhancements.

July Focus: Policy and Financing Options

- Review funding and/or finance implications for various policy scenarios
- Discuss policy options and recommendations

September Focus: Final Report Presentation

- Present final findings and recommendations

When specific dates have been set for the monthly meetings, they will be posted on the City of San Diego's Web site.

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